

States expand low-interest loan programs for farms, businesses and new housing

By DAVID A. LIEB
Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP)

— On the first business day of the new year, Missouri Treasurer Vivek Malek began accepting applications for about \$120 million of state-subsidized, low-interest loans to small businesses, farmers and affordable housing developers.

Within six hours, Malek had so many requests for the money that he had to cut off applications.

"The demand is huge, and it is real," Malek said.

Missouri's situation, though extreme, is not entirely unique. From New York to Illinois to Montana, states have seen surging public interest in little-known programs that use state funds to spur private investment with bargain-priced loans.



Missouri Treasurer Vivek Malek speaks about a program that uses state funds to back low-interest loans during an interview on Jan. 4, 2024, at his state Capitol office in Jefferson City, Missouri.

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States expand low-interest loan programs for farms, businesses and new housing

Continued from Front

The programs have taken off after a series of key interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve made virtually all loans more expensive, whether for farmers purchasing seed or businesses wanting to expand. To combat inflation in consumer prices, the Fed raised its benchmark interest rate 11 times from March 2022 to last July, setting it at a two-decade high.

Under so-called linked-deposit programs, states deposit money in banks at below-market interest rates. Banks then leverage those funds to provide short-term, low-interest loans to particular borrowers, often in agriculture or small business. The programs can save thousands of dollars for borrowers by reducing their interest rates by an average 2-3 percentage points.

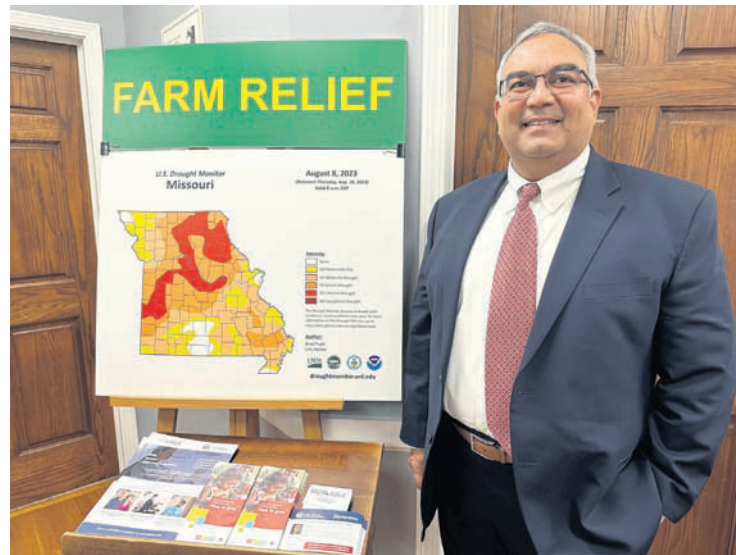
States typically cap the amount of money available for such discounted rates at either a flat dollar amount or a percentage of their total fund balances, because the programs result in less earn-

ings for the state. Many states have built large surpluses from pandemic-era revenues, meaning they have more money available to deposit in banks.

Though most states don't currently offer such programs, some that shelved them when interest rates were low are now considering whether to revive them to aid financially-strapped businesses and residents.

"I can say in talks with other state treasurers that there is a definite increased interest in treasury money, whether that is through a linked-deposit program or a different vehicle," said Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs, who is president of the National Association of State Treasurers.

Illinois has nearly \$950 million of deposits linked to low-interest loans for farmers, businesses and individuals. That's up substantially from past years. In 2015, Frerichs said, the state's agricultural investment program had just two low-interest loans. By 2022, that had grown to \$51 million of loans. Last year, Illinois made \$667 mil-



Missouri Treasurer Vivek Malek stands near a poster promoting drought conditions and state aid programs on Jan. 4, 2024, at his Capitol office in Jefferson City, Mo.

Associated Press

lion of low-rate deposits for agricultural loans.

With rising demand, Frerichs recently raised the program's overall cap from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion.

Though smaller in scope, New York's program also has seen an explosion of applicants. In 2022, New York had 42 applications for state deposits in financial institutions linked to \$20 million in low-interest loans. Last year, that rose to 317

applications linked to more than \$220 million of loans, said Rafael Salaberrios, a senior vice president who manages capital access programs at Empire State Development, New York's economic development agency.

"As the banks see the benefit, they are inundating us with applications — and that's a good thing," Salaberrios said. He added: "The linked deposit has allowed for the growth of small businesses to continue even during these high (interest) rate environments." Because of rising demand, Missouri's linked-deposit loan program neared its statutory cap of \$800 million last May. After some existing loans expired, the treasurer's office was able to reopen applications at 10 a.m. on Jan. 2. By 4 p.m. that day, it had approached the cap again — receiving 142 applications totaling over \$119 million — and closed the application window.

About half the applications came on behalf of customers of just two financial institutions — OakStar Bank and FCS Financial, a leading agricultural lender. FCS Financial had over 100 additional applications in line to submit when applications were cut off, said Brian Zimmerschied, vice president for its commercial crop lending team.

BTC Bank in rural Bethany, Missouri, had planned to turn in about dozen applications on behalf of its customers. But it missed out entirely because of the quick cutoff, bank CEO

Doug Fish said.

Among those left disappointed was Jason Bernard, a farmer near Bethany who had hoped for a low-interest loan to help purchase this year's supply of seed, fertilizer and chemical spray.

With higher interest rates, "it's a lot harder to make it, just because your payments," Bernard said.

The Missouri treasurer's office is backing legislation to raise the program's cap from \$800 million to \$1.2 billion, which would mark a 50% increase in capacity.

The expansion could cost the state \$12 million of potential earnings, though that could be partly offset by the economic activity generated from those loans, according to a legislative fiscal analysis. In Montana, lawmakers last year authorized a new program to address a shortage of affordable housing.

The Montana Board of Investments launched a linked-deposit loan initiative in October that received \$77 million of applications within two months, reaching a self-imposed cap and forcing it to close applications sooner than expected.

Republican state Rep. Mike Hopkins, who sponsored the housing incentive legislation, was thrilled with the response. "We're in a bit of a jam in the state of Montana" for affordable housing, Hopkins said, and "we were able to get money out the door as quickly as possible."

Officials in Iowa, Kansas and Ohio also told the AP they had increased demand for programs that deposit state money in banks to provide low-interest loans.

The number of such loan recipients in Kansas tripled from 2022 to 2023. In Ohio, the amount of money provided for those loans rose by two-thirds during that time, to more than \$600 million.

Oklahoma's linked-deposit program has been dormant since 2010 amid low interest rates, but at least two banks recently contacted the treasurer's office about the possibility of restarting it, said Deputy Treasurer Jordan Harvey. □

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Some U.S. states and NYC succeed in getting 2020 census numbers double-checked and increased

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

Illinois is adding tens of thousands of people to its population total, and California is getting misplaced sailors on an aircraft carrier put in the right location, after successfully asking for a review of their 2020 census figures.

New York City also appears to have gotten an additional 1,090 people added to its population total recently after asking the Census Bureau to double-check the city's numbers from the head count of every U.S. resident, city officials said.

The once-a-decade census produces population figures that help determine political power and the annual distribution of \$2.8 trillion in federal funding. The Census Bureau has two programs giving governments opportunities to have their population totals reviewed and adjusted if need be. Nearly 200 requests for reviews were filed by tribal, local and state governments for the 2020 census. Changes from the reviews will be applied only to future annual population estimates used for the rest of the decade in determining



The sun sets behind the New York skyline, Nov. 13, 2022, as seen from Calvary Cemetery.
Associated Press

federal funding. They can't be used to change how many congressional seats each state was allotted during the apportionment process, nor for the data used for redrawing political districts.

Here's a look at how two of the most populous U.S. states, and the nation's largest city, had their reviews resolved recently.

CALIFORNIA

For the nation's most pop-

ulous state, with 38.9 million residents, it was more about putting things in the right place rather than adding people.

The placement of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, along with its more than 5,000 crew members, was corrected so that it's in National City, rather than in neighboring San Diego. Although part of the ship is located in San Diego, what matters is where crew

members get off and on the ship, and that part of Naval Base San Diego is in National City, state officials said.

The 4,000 prisoners at the Mule Creek State Prison also were reallocated from Amador County to the city of Lone after California requested that change.

The reviews for California were "just an opportunity to suggest to the bureau that some things are in

the wrong place," Walter Schwarm, the state's chief demographer, said in an email.

ILLINOIS

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker announced this month that the nation's sixth most populous state was getting an additional 47,000 people to its population total after the state asked for a review of its census figures. Illinois officials believed that the 2020 census had overlooked more than 40,500 people living in care homes or senior living facilities and more than 5,800 college students living in dorms, the governor's office said.

These "group quarters" were among the most difficult places to count as campuses closed and prisons and nursing homes were locked down at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Census Bureau created a separate program to handle these challenges.

"This correction will bring in millions in additional federal funding for crucial programs and help to ensure future counts reflect the true number of Illinois residents," Pritzker said in a statement. □

More than 300 journalists around the world imprisoned because of their work, report says

NEW YORK (AP) — An estimated 320 journalists around the world were imprisoned because of their work toward the end of 2023, according to a report issued Thursday by the Committee to Protect Journalists, which called it a disturbing attempt to smother independent voices.

That's the second-highest number of jailed journalists since the committee began its annual census in 1992. It's down from 367 in 2022, due primarily to the release of many in Iran, either on bail or as they await sentencing, the committee

said.

"Our research shows how entrenched authoritarianism is globally, with governments emboldened to stamp out critical reporting and prevent public accountability," said Jodie Ginsberg, the committee's chief executive officer.

More than a third of the journalists in jail according to the CPJ's Dec. 1, 2023, census were in China, Myanmar and Belarus, the report said.

Israel is tied with Iran for sixth place, the country's highest ranking ever on CPJ's annual list.

Each of the 17 that were held in Israel at the time of the census were Palestinians arrested in the West Bank since the start of the war between Israel and Hamas on Oct. 7, the report said.

Twelve of the 17 nonlocal journalists who CPJ says are imprisoned throughout the world were being held in Russia. They include two U.S. citizens: Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and Alsu Kurmasheva of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, both of whom are being held in pretrial detention. □



Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich stands in a glass cage in a courtroom at the Moscow City Court, in Moscow, Russia, on Dec. 14, 2023.

Associated Press

Ann Arbor Public Schools approves Mideast cease-fire resolution that had stoked controversy

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI
Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP)

— A public school district in Michigan approved a resolution calling for a bilateral cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war while also encouraging its teachers to discuss the conflict in its classrooms following an emotionally charged meeting Wednesday.

The resolution approved by the Ann Arbor Public Schools board appears to be among the first times that a public school system in the United States has made such a statement on the international conflict.

It followed an over five-hour meeting that stretched into the early hours of Thursday after 120 people gave public comments in both support and opposition of the resolution.

Tensions remained high throughout the meeting in Ann Arbor, a community close to 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of Detroit and home to the University of Michigan. Similar tensions have been seen across the



The Ann Arbor Public Schools board discusses a resolution calling for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war at Pioneer High School, Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2024, in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Associated Press

nation in response to the war in Gaza, which is now entering its fourth month following a deadly Oct. 7 attack by Hamas militants. The conflict has divided college campuses, where long-simmering tensions are occasionally erupting in violence and shatter-

ing the sense of safety that makes colleges hubs of free discourse. Dozens of U.S. cities, including Ann Arbor, have approved cease-fire resolutions that have no legal authority but reflect the pressure on local governments to speak up on the Israel-Hamas war,

The resolution passed in Ann Arbor was one of the first times that a public school system in Michigan had considered such a statement, said Don Wotruba, executive director at Michigan Association of School Boards, prior to the scheduled vote.

"What they're thinking about doing would be pretty rare, if not the first time. Particularly as it's related to a more international situation," Wotruba said.

The district "expresses support for a bilateral cease-fire in Gaza and Israel," according to the resolution, and "encourages educators within the Ann Arbor School District to facilitate informed and respectful dialogue about the conflict." Four of the seven board members voted in favor of the resolution, with two abstaining from the vote. Rima Mohammad, who is Palestinian, had been one of the most outspoken members in support of it.

"This resolution says that kids who have names like mine are seen, heard and valued," Mohammad said just prior to the vote.

Some parents in the district, which holds nearly 17,000 students, had expressed outrage about the resolution, and a petition opposing it collected nearly 2,000 signatures. □

Mississippi has the highest rate of preventable deaths in the US, health official says

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG
Associated Press/Report for America

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Mississippi has improved some of its poor health outcomes, but its people are more likely to die unnecessarily than residents of any other state, the state's top health official said Thursday.

State Health Officer Dr. Daniel Edney urged legislators who just began this year's session to work with health officials to improve Mississippi's status as the nation's unhealthiest state, ranking at the bottom of virtually every health care indicator and at the top of every health disparity.

"If we choose the right policies for our people, we will see us move off the radar of having the highest rate

of preventable death," Edney said at a news conference inside the Mississippi Capitol. Mississippi ranks

worst for infant mortality, with Black infants nearly twice as likely as whites to die over the last decade,

according to a report unveiled Thursday by the Mississippi State Medical Association. While Mississippi managed to lower its opioid death rate by 10% in 2022, it still leads the nation in firearm deaths. And while the state's obesity and diabetes rates have declined recently, they remain among the nation's highest, with heart disease still the state's leading cause of death, the report says. Increasing access to health care coverage for working-class Mississippians is key to improving outcomes, Edney said. Mississippi is one of 10 states that has not expanded Medicaid coverage to people working in jobs that provide modest wages but no private health insurance. The de-

bate has stalled because of opposition from Republican leaders, including Gov. Tate Reeves, who refers to Medicaid as "welfare," but new Republican House Speaker Jason White says he wants legislators to consider Medicaid expansion as a way to bring up to \$1 billion of federal money each year to the state, where some hospitals are struggling to remain open. White has not come out in full support of expansion.

As the new chairwoman of the House Medicaid Committee, Republican Rep. Missy McGee would play a big role in any push for expansion. She helped lead a successful effort last year to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from two months to a full year. □



At a news conference inside the Mississippi Capitol, Dr. John Mitchell, center, president of the Mississippi State Medical Association, and flanked by area physicians, called for state leaders to work with health officials to improve Mississippi's status as the nation's unhealthiest state across several metrics, Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, in Jackson, Miss.

Associated Press

Russia's foreign minister rejects a U.S. proposal to resume talks on nuclear arms control

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's top diplomat on Thursday dismissed a U.S. proposal to resume a dialogue on nuclear arms control, saying it's impossible while Washington offers military support to Ukraine.

Speaking at his annual news conference, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused the West of fueling global security risks by encouraging Ukraine to ramp up strikes on Russian territory and warned that Moscow will achieve its goals in the conflict despite Western assistance for Kyiv.

Commenting on a U.S. proposal to resume contacts in the sphere of nuclear arms control, Lavrov described it as "unacceptable," saying that Moscow has put forward its stance in a diplomatic letter last month. He argued that for such talks to be held, Washington first needs to revise its current hostile policy toward Russia.

White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said in June the Biden administration is ready to



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov speaks during his annual news conference in Moscow, Russia, Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024.

talk to Russia without conditions about a future nuclear arms control even as Russia-U.S. ties are at their lowest point since the Cold War, noting "it is in neither of our countries' interest to embark on opening the competition in the strategic nuclear forces."

But Lavrov charged that Washington's push for the

revival of nuclear talks has been driven by a desire to resume inspections of Russia's nuclear weapons sites. He described such U.S. demands as "indecent" and cynical in view of Ukraine's attacks on Russian nuclear-capable bomber bases during the conflict.

He mocked the U.S. offer to resume nuclear arms dia-

logue, arguing that Washington's position amounts to saying, "we have declared you an enemy, but we're ready to talk about how we could look at your strategic nuclear arsenal again, that's something different."

Extensive mutual inspections of nuclear weapons sites were envisaged by the

New START treaty, which then-presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev signed in 2010. The inspections were halted in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and never resumed.

In February 2023, Russian President Vladimir Putin suspended Moscow's participation in the treaty, saying Russia could not allow U.S. inspections of its nuclear sites at a time when Washington and its NATO allies have openly declared Moscow's defeat in Ukraine as their goal. Moscow emphasized, however, that it wasn't withdrawing from the pact altogether and would continue to respect the caps on nuclear weapons the treaty set.

The New START, the last remaining nuclear arms control pact between Russia and the United States, limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers. It's set to expire in 2026, and the lack of dialogue on anchoring a successor deal has worried arms control advocates. □

Associated Press

Northern Ireland sees biggest strike in years as workers walk out over pay and political deadlock

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Tens of thousands of public sector workers walked off the job across

Northern Ireland on Thursday to protest political deadlock that has left them without pay increases, and

the region without a functioning government.


Schools were closed, hospitals offered a skeleton service and authorities warned people not to travel unless it was essential as road-gritting crews joined the strike in the middle of a bitterly cold snap.

The 24-hour strike by about 150,000 teachers, nurses, bus drivers and others is the biggest walkout in years in Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom with its own regional government. That government has not functioned for almost two years since one of the two power-sharing parties walked out in a dispute over post-Brexit trade rules. □



Public sector workers walk from the picket line at the Royal Victoria Hospital to a rally at Belfast City Hall, in Belfast, Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, as an estimated 150,000 workers take part in walkouts over pay across Northern Ireland.

Associated Press



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ENJOY YOUR SPECIAL DAY JIM.

A cholera outbreak in Zambia has caused more than 400 deaths and infected 10,000

By NOEL SICHALWE

Associated Press

LUSAKA, Zambia (AP) —

Zambia is reeling from a major cholera outbreak that has killed more than 400 people and infected more than 10,000, leading authorities to order schools across the country to remain shut after the end-of-year holidays.

A large soccer stadium in the capital city has been converted into a treatment facility.

The Zambian government is embarking on a mass vaccination program and says it's providing clean water 2.4 million liters a day to communities that are affected across the southern African nation.

The national disaster management agency has been mobilized.

Cholera is an acute diarrhea infection caused by a bacteria that is typically spread via contaminated food or water. The disease is strongly linked to poverty and inadequate access to clean water.

The outbreak in Zambia began in October and 412 people have died and 10,413 cases have been recorded, according to the latest count on Wednesday.



People wait outside a cholera treatment centre, in Lusaka, Zambia, Friday, Jan 12, 2024.

Associated Press

day from the Zambia Public Health Institute, the government body that deals with health emergencies.

The Health Ministry says cholera has been detected in nearly half of the country's districts and nine out of 10 provinces, and the nation of about 20 million people has been recording more than 400 cases a day. "This outbreak continues to pose a threat to the health security of the nation,"

Health Minister Sylvia Masebo said, outlining it was a nationwide problem.

The United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, called the fatality rate of around 4% in the three-month outbreak "a devastatingly high number." When treated, cholera typically has a death rate of less than 1%. There have been recent cholera outbreaks in other southern African nations including Malawi, Mozam-

bique and Zimbabwe. More than 200,000 cases and over 3,000 deaths have been reported in southern Africa since the start of 2023, UNICEF said. Malawi had its worst cholera outbreak in decades in 2023. Last year, the World Health Organization reported that about 30 countries globally, also including Nigeria and Uganda in Africa, suffered serious outbreaks in the last few years.

Cholera barely affects countries in the developed world and can be easily treated but can be quickly fatal if not treated.

More than half 229 of the victims in the Zambian outbreak died before being admitted to a health facility, the public health institute said.

Zambia has had several major cholera outbreaks since the 1970s but this one is the worst for 20 years in terms of the caseload, according to Dr. Mazyanga Mazaba, the director of public health policy and communication at the public health institute.

The cholera bacteria can also survive longer in warmer weather and unusually heavy rains and storms in southern Africa have contributed to recent outbreaks, experts say.

WHO said last year that while poverty and conflict remain the main drivers for cholera, climate change has contributed to the disease's upsurge in many places across the globe since 2021 by making storms wetter and more frequent. A cyclone sparked a spiraling cholera outbreak in Mozambique last year. □

The drop in Panama Canal traffic due to a severe drought could cost up to \$700 million



A cargo ship is guided through the Panama Canal, in Panama City, Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2024.

Associated Press

PANAMA CITY (AP) — A severe drought that began last year has forced authorities to slash ship crossings by 36% in the Panama Canal, one of the world's most important trade routes.

The new cuts announced Wednesday by authorities in Panama are set to deal an even greater economic blow than previously expected.

Panama Canal Administrator Ricaurte Vásquez now estimates that dipping water levels could cost them between \$500 million and \$700 million in 2024, compared to previous estimates of \$200 million.

One of the most severe droughts to ever hit the Central American nation has stirred chaos in the 50-mile (80-kilometer) maritime route, causing a traffic jam of vessels, casting doubts on the canal's reliability for international shipping and raising concerns about its affect on global trade.

"It's vital that the country sends a message that we're going to take this on and find a solution to this water problem," Vásquez said.

The disruption of the major trade route between Asia and the United States

comes at a precarious time. Attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthi rebels have rerouted vessels away from the crucial corridor for consumer goods and energy supplies.

The combination is having far-reaching effects on global trade by delaying shipments and raising transport costs. Some companies had planned to reroute to the Red Sea a key route between Asia and Europe to avoid delays at the Panama Canal, analysts say.

Now, that's no longer an option for most. □



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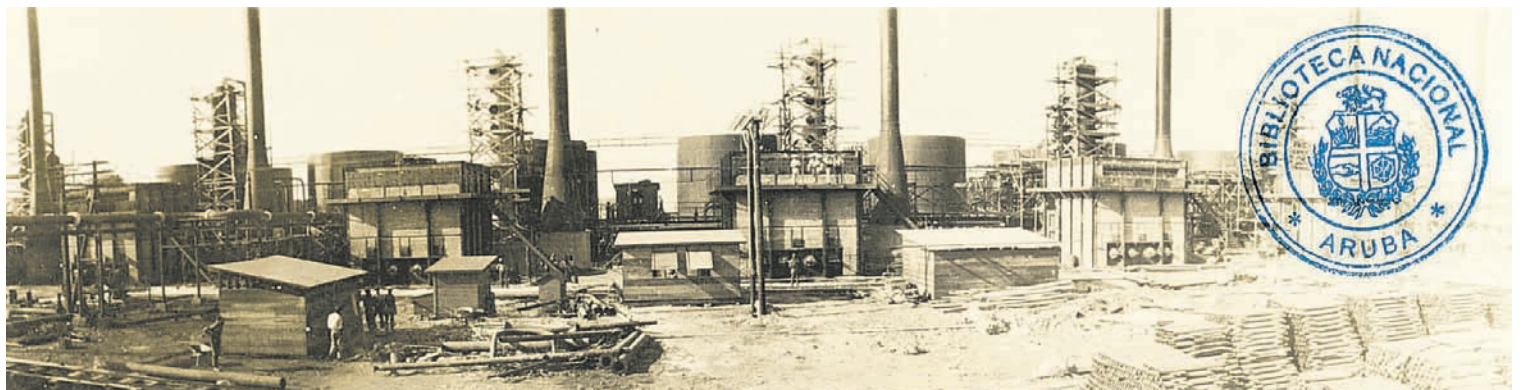


Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the time, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherlands Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the subsistence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in



Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experienced by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island in the mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for

and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially

that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness within the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life

and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/ Dera Gai (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas





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The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West

India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks



and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Sources: Etnia Nativa & gold-mineranch.com.

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Emergency services

Even though most people don't even want to think about having to contact emergency services—especially not while on their vacation, it is still important to know what number to dial in case of the unlikely event of an accident or severe incident.

Police: 100
Police Tipline: 11141
Ambulance: 911
Fire Dept: 115
Oranjestad: HOH hospital: +297-527-4000
San Nicolas: ImSan: +297-527-8833

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

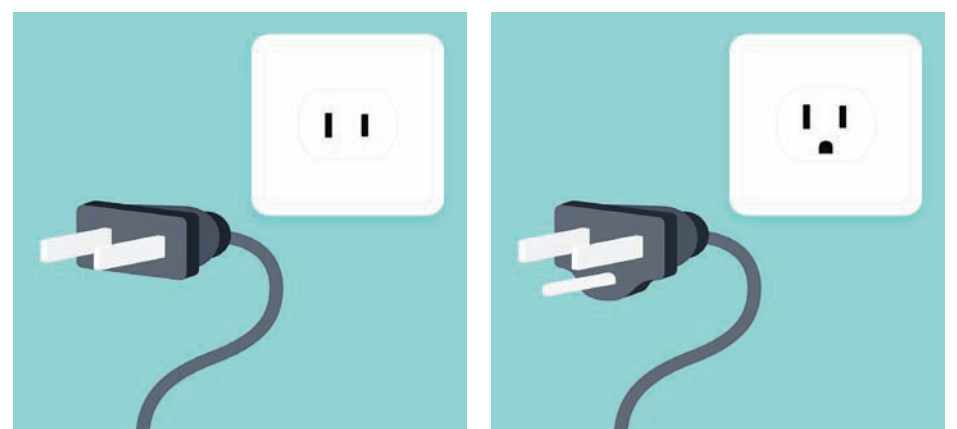
Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Taxis

Prices for taxi fair are set by the Department of Public Traffic and are based on destination rather than mileage. Most taxis can take up to five passengers, but this may vary depending on the vehicle. Taxis are pretty much always available and you can ever hire one for \$45 an hour.

Safety

Aruba is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe. □



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Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.

On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University



of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down

when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times



in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also impor-

tant for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! ☐

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their

land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one

involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitchhike, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced

for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass contributes a lot to our culture of folkloric story-telling. Source: visitaruba.com. ☐



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How tourism started on Aruba

ORANJESTAD — When Lago Aruba Refinery, one of the world largest oil refineries back then, went over to the automatization of their refining-industry, layoffs began to rain so fast that an unemployment problem arose on Aruba. In order to widen the basis of our economic existence, the administration took various projects in hand.

The first of these was a greater concentration on Caribbean tourism which had soared since 1950. Plans were made to at-

tract cruise ships to the Paardenbaai (Horses' Bay) in Oranjestad. The arrival of the first cruise ship of that time, The Trade Wind, calling port on February 1955, had become a historical event. Receptions and festivities had been organized. A welcome committee, consisting of Aruban girls dressed for the occasion in specially designed gowns, stood ready on the quay to guide the tourists to the Oranjestad shopping-center. Almost all cars on the island streamed to the harbor, traffic jams were

caused, and one wondered whether the Aruban population were setting forth to see the tourists or whether the tourists were here to see the island. The 'Trade Wind' started up a new era in the history of the island's economy. Tourism dates back from the beginning of 1955. The Grace Line, whose freighters only used to call at our island before June 1956, since then has had their luxury liners head for Horses' Bay. Other lines followed. During the cruising-season the biggest tourist vessels were mooring our harbor. In 1956 a total of 3002 foreigners visited Aruba and in 1960 the number had risen to 13,125. Night-stays at hotels in those three years increased from 31,936 to 94,607. The hotels naturally were not able to cope with this sudden increase. Seeing this, Ch.J. Neme, who had built the Strand Hotel before in February 1957, opened the Hotel Basi Ruti on Palm Beach.

The construction of the first high rise hotel, Aruba Caribbean Hotel and Casino,



attracted the rich and famous. It was beneficial for our island seeing that there was a yearly-increasing wave of sight-seers in the Caribbean area due to this building. In this manner, it was hoped that a considerable source of income would be opened up. To finance the hotel the Aruven Company Inc. was founded, of which the island was the largest shareholder. In Venezuela the Venaruba Company Inc. was set up to collect funds. Other shareholders were banks, companies, and the business world.

On July 1958, this hotel, whose building-expenses amounted to 8 million Antillean guilders, was opened. Palm Beach, which until then could only be reached by secondary roads, was connected with town and

airfield by a boulevard. This boulevard, which had a construction cost of 1 1/3 million Antillean guilders, to which another 175.000 guilders should be added for the cost of illumination, was opened on May 1st, 1958. The coastal area meant to be a tourist resort is now of easy access.

In 1961 the quaint restaurant De Olde Molen (The Old Mill) was established here. A mill was purchased in the Netherlands and carried across the ocean for this purpose. Stay pending for part II of 'How tourism started on Aruba' next week Tuesday.

To get to know more about Aruba and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianaativa03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels. □



Article by: Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to the high rise hotels



Did you know about... Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 2)

(Oranjestad)—In Yesterday's issue, we've provided some basic rules when driving on the four-lane highways and roundabouts on the island. Today, we want to offer you more tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights,

roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side

down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba. □

Picture credits: aruba-travelguide.com



bebouwde kom



end bebouwde kom



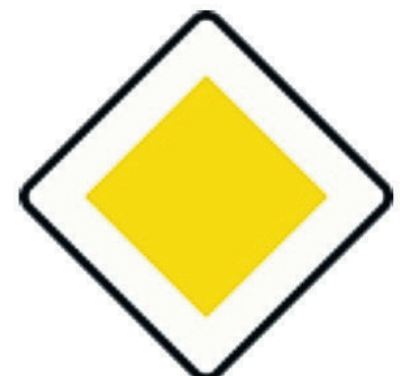
end priority



end speed limit



intersection priority



priority



speed limit



stop sign



triangle stop sign

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Baseball's

1 Missing Pee Wee

5 Valentine 40 God of
trim war

9 Like bar 41 Liberal
beer study

11 Reunion
attendees

13 Brink

14 Change
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15 Greek
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16 Darling

18 More
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20 Common
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21 Looked
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23 That lady

24 Outlaw

25 Poll
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27 Literary
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29 Go astray

30 Natural
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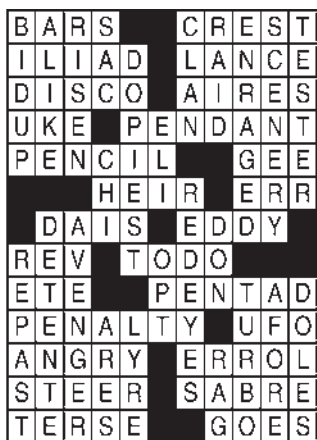
32 Scurry

34 Chapel
promise

35 Hummer's
instrument

36 Buddy of
"Barnaby
Jones"

38 Derisive
sound



Yesterday's answer

DOWN

1 Cherishes

2 Boxing
combo

3 Barber's
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4 Price

5 Debussy
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6 Lotion
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7 Short play
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8 Dominion

10 Annoy

12 Very

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17 Tie

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19 Pooch

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24 Check

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25 Office

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26 Secret

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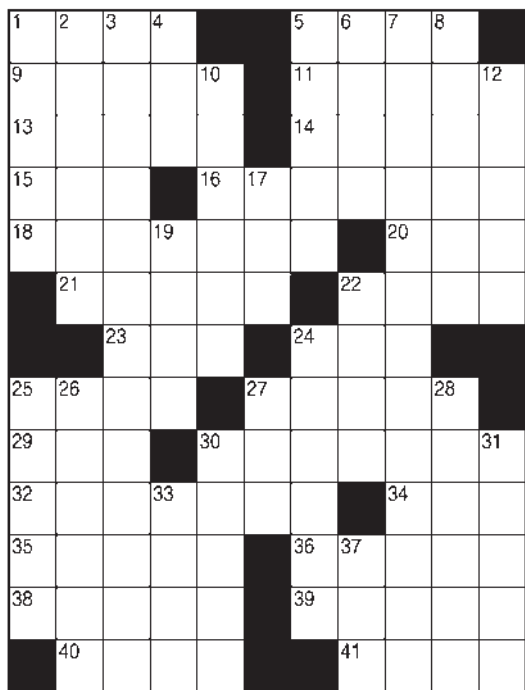
31 Sounds

33 Additional

amount

37 Arthur of

TV



1-19

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-19

CRYPTOQUOTE

J T T E M D N M G P M E F P T X F . M V

G I T S P W A F F D V F L F W M D V T

Y M V I Z A Z D W T D , T L D T V Z V

Z P P . — Q S P M Z J I M P W

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: START WHERE YOU ARE, WITH WHAT YOU HAVE. MAKE SOMETHING OF IT AND NEVER BE SATISFIED. — GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

What to do about debt in retirement



A Social Security card is displayed on Oct. 12, 2021, in Tigard, Ore.

Associated Press

By KATE ASHFORD of Nerd-Wallet

A growing number of older adults are in debt in retirement, according to the 2022 Survey of Consumer Finances from the Federal Reserve. Among people ages 65 to 74, the share with debt rose to 65% in 2022, up from 50% in 1989 (the first time this question was asked). For people 75 and over, 53% report holding debt in 2022 versus 21% in 1989. This is a big challenge, since people's income in retirement is traditionally limited. But there are strategies for tackling your balance sheet later in life.

Take note: Not all debt is bad debt. "It's not necessarily the worst thing to have," says Jack Heintzelman, a certified financial planner in Boston. If it's debt that earns you a tax deduction, he says, like a mortgage, it may be fine to hang onto it while you give your money elsewhere a chance to grow.

But if debt is straining your retirement budget or you're paying a high interest rate, a pay-it-off plan is key. Here are some meth-

ods that can help.

PICK UP SIDE WORK

The traditional retirement model work for 40 years and then quit forever may not be the most appropriate approach anymore. Supplementing retirement savings and Social Security benefits with part-time earnings can make your money go further and help you pay off remaining debt.

For some people, consulting in their field is a natural step between full-time work and full-time play. Other people can monetize an interest or pick up hourly work a few days a week.

"We have a client who works in a music repair shop for part-time income," says Colin Day, a CFP in St. Louis. "They get to explore their hobby while also getting some level of income."

CONSIDER MOVING OR DOWNSIZING

Your home is usually one of your biggest expenses, and if you live in a high-cost area, you might be paying high property taxes and maintenance costs, which eat into your ability to pay for other things.

Moving to a smaller home or to an area with a lower cost of living can free up room in your budget. You might also get better weather, to boot.

"We have a fair amount of clients who are moving from more northwestern states with a higher income tax and colder weather down to places like Florida," says Crystal McKeon, a CFP in Houston, who notes that Florida has no state income tax and decidedly warmer weather.

Andrew Herzog, a CFP in Plano, Texas, recalls a client who's considering moving to a smaller home that's closer to his daughter, easier to maintain and potentially mortgage-free if he can sell his current house for a high enough price.

"Downsizing can absolutely work," Herzog says. "It's best when you do it for multiple reasons."

TIME YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

The Social Security equation when to claim, when to wait depends on your health, your marital status and your savings. But debt can also affect your plans. Taking Social Security early might give you the income you need to get rid of your balances.

"As long as I'm not blowing up my plan by drawing Social Security early, it could help sustain me by not having to draw down my investment assets," Day says.

On the other hand, waiting to claim means you'll have a higher Social Security check later benefits increase by 8% per year after full retirement age until age 70.

Depending on the type of debt, it may be better to wait until you can throw more money at it. Talk to a financial professional about the best option for you.

"I would do the calculations," Herzog says. "That's a pretty big asset for people when you're older." □

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24/7

Largest deep-sea coral reef to date is mapped by scientists off the US Atlantic coast

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scientists have mapped the largest coral reef deep in the ocean, stretching hundreds of miles off the U.S. Atlantic coast.

While researchers have known since the 1960s that some coral were present off the Atlantic, the reef's size remained a mystery until new underwater mapping technology made it possible to construct 3D images of the ocean floor. The largest yet known deep coral reef "has been right under our noses, waiting to be discovered," said Derek Sowers, an oceanographer at the nonprofit Ocean Exploration Trust.

Sowers and other scientists, including several at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, recently published maps of the reef in the journal *Geomatics*.

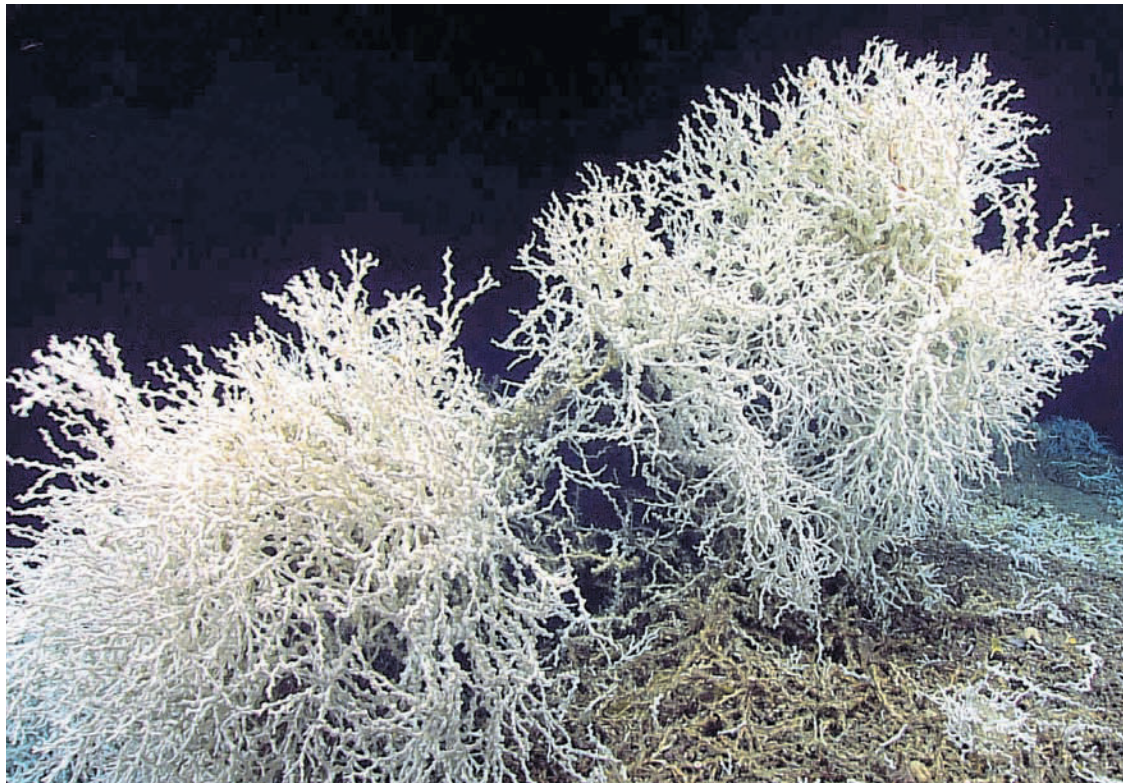
The reef extends for about 310 miles (499 kilometers) from Florida to South Carolina and at some points reaches 68 miles (109 kilometers) wide. The total area is nearly three times the size of Yellowstone National Park.

"It's eye-opening it's breathtaking in scale," said Stuart Sandin, a marine biologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, who was not involved in the study.

The reef was found at depths ranging from 655 feet to 3,280 feet (200 meters to 1,000 meters), where sunlight doesn't penetrate. Unlike tropical coral reefs, where photosynthesis is important for growth, coral this far down must filter food particles out of the water for energy.

Deep coral reefs provide habitat for sharks, swordfish, sea stars, octopus, shrimp and many other kinds of fish, the scientists said.

Tropical reefs are better known to scientists and snorkelers because they're more accessible.



In this image provided by NOAA Ocean Exploration, a few large thickets of *Lophelia pertusa* coral grow along the edges of large rock shelf overhangs at the Blake Plateau off the southeastern coast of the U.S., in July 2019.

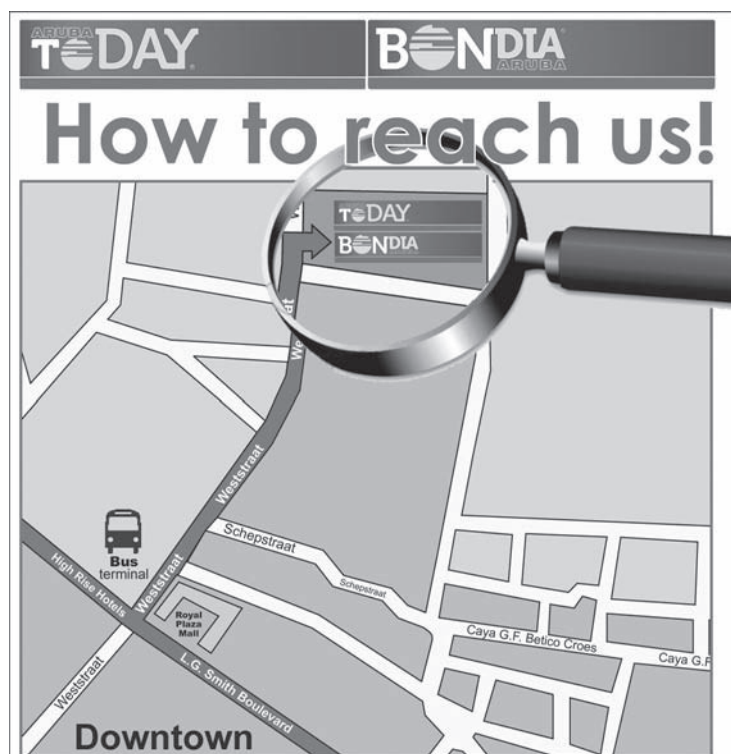
Associated Press

The world's largest tropical coral reef system, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, stretches for about 1,430 miles (2,301 kilometers).

Sowers said it's possible that larger deep-sea reefs will be discovered in the future since only about 75% of the world's ocean floor has been mapped in high-resolution. Only 50% of U.S. offshore waters have been mapped. Maps of the

ocean floor are created using high-resolution sonar devices carried on ships.

Deep reefs cover more of the ocean floor than tropical reefs. Both kinds of habitat are susceptible to similar risks, including climate change and disturbance from oil and gas drilling, said Erik Cordes, a marine biologist at Temple University and co-author of the new study. □



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A scholar discovers stories and poems possibly written by Louisa May Alcott under a pseudonym

By **MICHAEL CASEY**

Associated Press

WORCESTER, Mass. (AP) —

The author of "Little Women" may have been even more productive and sensational than previously thought.

Max Chapnick, a postdoctoral teaching associate at Northeastern University, believes he found about 20 stories and poems written by Louisa May Alcott under her own name as well as pseudonyms for local newspapers in Massachusetts in the late 1850s and early 1860s.

One of the pseudonyms is believed to be E. H. Gould, including a story about her house in Concord, Massachusetts, and a ghost story along the lines of the Charles Dickens classic "A Christmas Carol." He also found four poems written by Flora Fairfield, a known pseudonym of Alcott's. One of the stories written under her own name was about a young painter.

"It's saying she's really like ... she's hustling, right? She's publishing a lot," Chapnick said on a visit to the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, a national research library of pre-20th century American history and culture that has some of the stories Chapnick discovered in its collection as well as a first edition of "Little Women."

Alcott remains best known for "Little Women," published in two installments in 1868-69. Her classic coming-of-age novel about the four March sisters Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy has been adapted several times into feature films, most recently by Greta Gerwig in 2019.

Chapnick discovered Alcott's other stories as part of his research into spiritualism and mesmerism. As he scrolled through digitized newspapers from the American Antiquarian Society, he found a story titled "The Phantom." After seeing the name Gould at the end of the story, he initially dismissed it as Alcott's story.



Max Chapnick, a postdoctoral teaching associate at Northeastern University, right, looks as Elizabeth Pope, Curator of Books & Digital Collections, points out a writing by "E. H. Gould" at the American Antiquarian Society, a national research library of pre-20th century American history and culture, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024, in Worcester, Mass.

But then he read the story again.

Chapnick found the name Alcott in the story a possible clue and saw that it was written about the time she would have been publishing similar stories. The story was also in the Olive Branch, a newspaper that had previously published her work.

As Chapnick searched through newspapers at the society and the Boston Public Library, he found more written by Gould though he admits definitive proof they were written by Alcott's has proven elusive. "There's a lot of circumstantial evidence to indicate that this is probably her," said Chapnick, who last year published a paper on his discoveries in J19, the Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists. "I don't think that there's definitive evidence either way yet. I'm interested in gathering more of it."

When first contacted by Chapnick about the writings, Gregory Eiselein, president of the Louisa May Alcott Society, said he was curious but skeptical.

"Over my more than thirty-year career as a literary scholar, I've received a variety of inquiries, emails, and manuscripts that propose the discovery of a new story by Louisa Alcott," Eiselein, also a professor at Kansas State University, said in an email interview. "Typically, they turn out to be a known, though not famous, text, or a story re-printed under a new title for a different newspaper or magazine."

But he has come to believe that Chapnick has found new stories, many of which shed light on Alcott's early career.

"What stands out to me is the impressive range and variety of styles in Alcott's early published works," he said.

"She writes sentimental poetry, thrilling supernatural stories, reform-minded non-fiction, work for children, work for adults, and more. It's also fascinating to see how Alcott uses, experiments with, and transforms the literary formulas popular in the 1850s."

Another Alcott scholar at Kansas State, Anne Phil-

lips, said she was "excited" by Chapnick's scholarship and said his paper makes a "compelling case" that these were her writings.

"Alcott scholars have had decades to compare her work in different genres, and that background is going to help us evaluate these new findings," she said in an email interview.

"She reworked and reused names and situations and details and expressions, and we have a good, broad base from which to begin considering these new discoveries," she said. "There's also something distinctive about her writing voice, across genres."

This isn't the first time that scholars have found stories written by Alcott under a pseudonym.

In the 1940s, Leona Rostenberg and Madeleine Stern found thrillers written under the name A. M. Barnard was an Alcott pseudonym. She also wrote nonfiction stories, including about the Civil War where she served as a nurse, under the pseudonym Tribulation Periwinkle.

It wasn't unusual for female

writers, especially during this period, to use a pseudonym. In the case of Alcott, she may have wanted to protect her family's reputation, since her family who though poor had wealthy connections that dated back to the American Revolutionary War.

"She might not have wanted them to know she was writing trashy stories about sex and ghosts and whatever," Chapnick said.

"I think she was canny," he continued. "She had an inkling that she would be a famous writer and she was trying to experiment and she didn't want her experimentation to get in the way of her future career. So she was writing under a pseudonym to sort of like protect her future reputation."

At the American Antiquarian Society, a researcher eagerly awaited the arrival of Chapnick earlier this month.

For them, this find is validation that their collection of nearly 4 million books, newspapers, periodicals, manuscripts and pamphlets is a boon to researchers studying early American history. Many of their holdings are salvaged from attics, antique shops, book fairs, garage sales.

"We're keeping these things for a reason. We're not just keeping them to hoard them and pile them up," Elizabeth Pope, the curator of books and digitized collections at the society. "We're thrilled when people can find stories in them."

For Chapnick, the collections offer the possibility of finding additional Alcott stories including those written under other pseudonyms.

"The detective work is fun. The not knowing is kind of fun. I both wish and don't wish that there would be a smoking gun, if that makes sense," he said. "It would be great to find out one way or the other, but not knowing is also very interesting." □

Blinkova upsets 2023 finalist Rybakina in a wild, record-long tiebreaker at the Australian Open

By JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Her hand and her legs were shaking, she'd missed nine match points but also saved six, and Anna Blinkova was 41 points into a wild tiebreaker that was the longest ever in a women's Grand Slam event.

Elena Rybakina, last year's Australian Open runner-up, was just as anxious on the other side of the net.

When Blinkova lunged to retrieve a backhand, aiming just to keep the rally alive, and Rybakina's next backhand sailed wide, it finished off a 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (20) second-round victory Thursday that she'll never, ever forget.

"It took me courage," she said. "It took me some certain calmness to stay in the present moment and to play point by point no matter what happens."

Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion who was runner-up here last year to Aryna Sabalenka, saved two match points in a third set that contained six service breaks.

Blinkova twice served for the match but couldn't finish off, and a double-fault in the 12th game sent it to a 10-point tiebreaker. Once there, 13 minutes after her first match points, Blinkova had two more points at 9-7 but again Rybakina saved them, and so it went on.

Blinkova, smiling, later de-



Anna Blinkova of Russia reacts after defeating Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan in their second round match at the Australian Open tennis championships at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024.

Associated Press

scribed it as the "endless tiebreaker." It went on for 32 minutes until Rybakina's backhand error ended it.

In terms of points 42 it was the longest tiebreaker ever in a women's major.

"It was super tough. I had so many match points," said Blinkova, who is ranked 57th and had 13 first-round exits in her previous 20 majors. "I tried to be aggressive but my hand was shaking. And my legs, too!"

"I tried to be calm, as much as I could."

It was one that Rybakina will dwell on, too. She knew she wasted chances.

But "I'm really proud that I

could fight till the end," Rybakina said. "I mean, you can't always play perfect. And of course I could have lost it even earlier."

It was a long, tough night for the tournament's No. 3 seeds on Melbourne Park's main court. Daniil Medvedev had to rally from two sets down to beat Emil Ruusuvuori 3-6, 6-7 (1), 6-4, 7-6 (1), 6-0 in a 4-hour, 23-minute match that ended at 3:39 a.m. local time.

Day 5 started with top-ranked Iga Swiatek had a narrow escape when she rallied from 4-1 down in the third set to beat 2022 runner-up Danielle Collins 6-4,

3-6, 6-4.

Swiatek was down two service breaks in the deciding set before she went on a five-game winning roll to finish off a match that featured wild momentum shifts and a 25-minute rain delay in 3 hours, 14 minutes.

"You can actually relax a little bit more because you know that, 'OK, probably I'm going to lose, so I don't care anymore,'" Swiatek said. "Then it's easier."

In her on-court interview, she joked: "Honestly, I was on the airport already."

"But I wanted to fight to the end, she said. "I'm really proud of myself."

Collins announced soon after that 2024 would be her last season on tour.

"Yeah, I lost 6-4 in the third to one of the best players in the world," Collins said. "And she played some great tennis. (I) left it all on the court."

Swiatek, a four-time major winner, next faces No. 50-ranked Linda Noskova, who beat U.S. qualifier McCartney Kessler 6-3, 1-6, 6-4. Fifth-ranked Jessica Pegula's run of three consecutive quarterfinals in Australia was ended in a 6-4, 6-2 loss to Clara Burel. Her fellow American, 2017 U.S. Open winner Sloane Stephens, took out No. 14 seed Daria Kasatkina 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 and advanced along with No. 11 Jelena Ostapenko, No. 12 Zheng Qinwen, No. 19 Elina Svitolina and No. 27 Emma Navarro.

The 2021 U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu's comeback major ended in a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 loss to Wang Yafan. Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz dropped a set for the first time in the tournament before recovering to beat Lorenzo Sonego 6-4, 6-7 (3), 6-3, 7-6 (3). With a strong breeze to contend with, Alcaraz was tested by Lorenzo Sonego before coming through in four sets and will next face 18-year-old Chinese wildcard entry Shang Juncheng, who ousted India's Sumit Nagal 2-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4. □



Golden State Warriors assistant coach Dejan Milojevic watches players warm up before an NBA preseason basketball game against the Denver Nuggets in San Francisco, Friday, Oct. 14, 2022.

Associated Press

Warriors vs. Mavericks game postponed following death of assistant coach Dejan Milojević

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)

— The Dallas Mavericks' game at the Golden State Warriors scheduled for Friday night has been postponed following the death of Warriors assistant coach Dejan Milojević, the NBA announced Thursday.

The date for the rescheduled game will be an-

nounced later.

Milojević, a mentor to two-time NBA MVP Nikola Jokic and a former star player in his native Serbia, died Wednesday in Utah after suffering a heart attack.

Milojević was part of the staff that helped the Warriors win the 2022 NBA championship.

He was 46.

Milojević died in Salt Lake City, where he was hospitalized Tuesday night after the medical emergency happened during a private team dinner.

The Warriors' game against the Utah Jazz scheduled for Wednesday also was postponed. □



Mike McCarthy sells belief in playoff breakthrough that has eluded Cowboys

By SCHUYLER DIXON
AP Pro Football Writer

FRISCO, Texas (AP) — Mike McCarthy sifted through several versions of selling his belief that the Dallas Cowboys can find a level of postseason success that has eluded the storied franchise for nearly three decades.

The coach faced reporters a day after a meeting with owner and general manager Jerry Jones ended with them agreeing McCarthy would return for a fifth season despite a stunning wild-card loss to Green Bay.

The Cowboys won the NFC East and entered the postseason with a chance to play at least twice at home, where they had a 16-game winning streak.

They exited as the first No. 2 seed to lose to a conference's last team in since the 14-team format was adopted in 2020. Dallas trailed by 32 points in the fourth quarter of the 48-32



Dallas Cowboys head coach Mike McCarthy, responds to questions during a news conference at the team's NFL football headquarters in Frisco, Texas, Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024.

Associated Press

loss to the Packers.

"We have established a championship program. It's just not a world championship yet," McCarthy told a packed news conference Thursday. "We know how to

win. We know how to train to win. We have the right people.

"But we have not crossed the threshold winning playoff games," McCarthy said. "It's extremely disappoint-

ing to be sitting here talking about. But I know how to win. We will get over that threshold. I have total confidence in that, and that's why I'm standing here today."

McCarthy won a Super Bowl and went to three other NFC championship games in 12-plus seasons as coach of the Packers. That's why Jones hired him in 2020 after 10 years of watching Jason Garrett's teams fail to get past the divisional round.

The most recent time Dallas reached an NFC title game was the last of the franchise's five Super Bowl titles during the 1995 season.

While McCarthy has to own being the coach of the first team with three consecutive 12-win playoff seasons not to reach a conference championship game, there's only so much history he can take.

"I'm going to take no responsibility, and I talked to the players too, and they have no responsibility on what's gone on here in the 20-plus years before this point," McCarthy said. "We're responsible for what's going on the program."

Reba McEntire, Post Malone and Andra Day to sing during Super Bowl pregame

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Country music star Reba McEntire will grace next month's Super Bowl stage to sing the national anthem while Post Malone will perform "America the Beautiful."

The performances will take place Feb. 11 at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas before the championship matchup and halftime show featuring Usher. Andra Day will also perform "Lift Every Voice and Sing" as part of the pregame

performances that will air on CBS. Actor Daniel Du-



Reba McEntire performs during the 2023 CMA Fest on Friday, June 9, 2023, at the Spotify House in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

rant will perform the national anthem in American sign language. He'll follow his "CODA" film castmate and Oscar winner Troy Kotsur, who took on the role last year.

Model-dancer Anjel Piñero will sign "America the Beautiful" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing" will be signed by actor-dancer Shaheem Sanchez. Emmy winner Adam Blackstone will produce and arrange the national anthem and "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Jay-Z's Roc Nation com-

pany and Emmy-winning producer Jesse Collins will serve as co-executive producers of the halftime show. McEntire, a three-time Grammy winner, has become a country music icon with more than 30 studio albums that includes a variety of hits such as "Fancy," "Consider Me Gone" and "Does He Love You." The highly decorated performer was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2011 and received a Kennedy Center honor in 2018.